

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph on Page 6 after Line 8:

-- Figure 3 is a partial sectional view illustrating the cutting edge portions of the opposing cutters of the present invention with sheet material residing there between wherein each of the cutters includes a crack initiator with a high rake angle extending from a cutter base having low rake angle.--

A1

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 12, Line 17 with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Although Figure 2 shows a first cutter 40 with a crack initiator 62 being used in conjunction with a second cutter 42 that is a typical prior art cutter, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that second cutter 42 can be replaced with a cutter that is similar or identical to first cutter 40. That is, second cutter 42 can include a crack initiator as well with rake and relief angles as discussed with reference to cutter base 64 and crack initiator 62. Such an arrangement is depicted in Figure 3 where there is illustrated a partial cross-sectional view of the cut edge portion of first and second opposing cutters 40, 91 with the same exemplary laminated sheet material depicted in Figure 1. The first and second opposing cutters 40, 91 can be circular slitter knife blades, curve slitter knife blades, straight slitter knife blades, curve chopping knife blades, straight chopping knife blades, and scissors. First cutter 40 is identical to first cutter 40 depicted and described with reference to Figure 2. The second cutter 91 also includes a crack initiator 92 (having a height 118) and a low rake cutter base 94. The crack initiator 92 further includes a rake edge 96 with a rake angle 98; and a relief edge 100 with a relief angle 102. The low rake cutter base 104 includes a rake edge 110 with a rake angle 112; and a relief edge 114 with a relief angle 116. The crack initiator 92 and low rake cutter base 94 can be made by a variety of methods including, for example, electric discharge machining, chemical etch, grinding, milling, molding, lapping, assembling two separate pieces of material, honing or burnishing. The main functions of the crack initiator 92 are to initiate and propagate a crack until the base rake edge 110 contacts the sheet material 30 and begins to drive the cutting process. Specifically, the crack initiator 92 is used to penetrate through the upper coating or laminate 32 and into the base web 31 while keeping the stress in the sheet material 30 concentrated

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A3

around the crack initiator 62 rather than spreading the high stress outside this confined zone and into a larger area. With this highly concentrated stress zone, the stress seen by the material or regions sensitive to stress, specifically the planar interface 36, is reduced. Reducing the stress at the planar interface 36 reduces the damage thereto resulting in reduced cutting defects. The function of the cutter base 94 is to continue the cutting process after the rake edge 110 of the cutter base 64 comes into contact with the sheet material 30 by taking over the cutting force from the crack initiator 92. As the cutter base 94 takes over the cutting force, it can protect the crack initiator 92 from further high stress contact of the sheet material 30 thereby resulting in a longer life of the crack initiator 92 and an overall longer tool life.--

Please replace the Parts List beginning on Page 14 with the following rewritten Parts List:

--PARTS LIST

- A4*
- 10 prior art cutting devices
12 rake angles
14 rake angles
16 relief angles
18 relief angles
20 sharpness of edges
22 sharpness of edges
24 clearance
26 cutters
28 cutters
30 sheet material
31 support or base web
32 upper layer or coating
34 lower layer or coating
36 planar interface
38 planar interface
40 1st opposing cutters

42 2nd opposing cutters
62 crack initiator
64 low rake cutter base
65 rake angle
66 rake edge
67 relief angle
68 rake angle
69 sharpness of edge
70 relief edge
72 relief angle
80 rake edge
82 rake angle
84 relief edge
86 relief angle
88 initiator height
90 clearance
91 opposing cutter
92 crack initiator
94 low rake cutter base
96 rake edge
98 rake angle
100 relief edge
102 relief angle
104 low rake cutter base
110 rake edge
112 rake angle
114 relief edge
116 relief angle
118 height--

A4